

When and how should I childproof my home?

Parents are encouraged to begin thinking about childproofing their home prior to when their children start crawling and walking. It's recommended that parents get down on all fours when searching the home for potential hazards in order to accurately identify dangerous items within reach of their children. Parents can purchase childproof items such as electrical outlet covers and cabinet latches. In addition, childproof covers for doors that lead outside or into rooms where children could be harmed are also available. Household cleaners and medications should be stored in their original containers in a cabinet out of children's reach.

Infant mobiles that are attached to cribs should be removed when children are able to stand on their own to prevent a choking hazard. Similarly, cribs should be moved away from windows that may have blinds and curtain cords. Furniture with sharp edges should either be removed or cushion covers need to be added to the corners to prevent injury. It's recommended that nonskid backing be used on rugs on slippery floors. When cooking, parents are encouraged to use the back burners and should turn all pot handles inward out of reach of little fingers. Storing fire extinguishers in readily available places as well as installing and maintaining smoke and carbon monoxide detectors could potentially save lives. Parents are encouraged to think like their children when safeguarding their home and should consider the safety in other homes that they frequently visit.